



PARENTAL GUIDANCE

By STC Helping Hands

This document outlines the legal frameworks, policy structures, and institutional guidelines governing parental responsibility within Swedish family law.



När socialtjänsten kontaktar dig eller tar ditt barn (LVU) When Social Services Contact You or Take Your Child (LVU)

1. Lag och rättigheter vid LVU Law and Rights under LVU

SE Svenska

Lagen (1990:52) om vård av unga (LVU) innebär att ett barn eller en ungdom endast kan omhändertas mot vårdnadshavarens vilja när det finns en **allvarlig och konkret risk för barnets hälsa eller utveckling**. Detta kan handla om situationer där det förekommer brister i hemmiljön, såsom omsorgssvikt eller andra allvarliga förhållanden, men även fall där barnet själv befinner sig i en destruktiv situation, exempelvis genom missbruk eller kriminalitet.

En grundläggande princip i lagen är att **barnets bästa alltid ska vara avgörande vid alla beslut**, vilket uttryckligen framgår av lagtexten:

"Vid beslut enligt denna lag ska vad som är bäst för den unge vara avgörande."

I situationer där socialtjänsten bedömer att det finns ett akut skyddsbehov kan socialnämnden fatta beslut om ett **omedelbart omhändertagande enligt 6 § LVU**. Ett sådant beslut innebär att barnet tas om hand och placeras direkt, även utan vårdnadshavarens samtycke. Beslutet måste dock skyndsamt underställas förvaltningsrätten, som inom en vecka ska pröva om åtgärden varit korrekt. Om socialnämnden inte skickar ärendet vidare i tid upphör beslutet att gälla.

GB English

The Act (1990:52) on the Care of Young Persons (LVU) allows compulsory care only in situations where there is a **serious and concrete risk to the child's health or development**. This may involve severe deficiencies in the home environment, such as neglect or unsafe conditions, but also situations where the child is engaged in destructive behaviour, including substance abuse or criminal activity.

A fundamental principle of the law is that **the best interests of the child must always be decisive** in any decision-making process.

In urgent situations, social services may decide on **immediate removal under Section 6 LVU**, meaning that the child is taken into care without consent and placed immediately. However, this decision must be submitted to the administrative court without delay, and the court must review it within one week. If the decision is not submitted in time, it ceases to apply.

2. Viktiga rättigheter Important Rights

SE Svenska

Som vårdnadshavare har du flera grundläggande rättigheter i ett LVU-ärende. Du har rätt att få tydlig information om varför barnet har omhändertagits och var barnet befinner sig. Socialtjänsten är skyldig att lämna ett skriftligt beslut och förklara de omständigheter som ligger till grund för åtgärden.

Du har även rätt till ett **offentligt biträde**, vilket innebär en advokat eller jurist som utses av domstolen och bekostas av staten. Detta juridiska ombud ska tillvarata både dina och barnets intressen under



hela processen. Om du inte behärskar svenska har du rätt till tolk vid alla kontakter med myndigheter samt översättning av viktiga handlingar.

Slutligen har du rätt att överklaga beslutet till högre instans inom tre veckor från det att du tagit del av beslutet.

GB English

As a guardian, you have several important legal rights in an LVU case. You have the right to receive clear information about why your child has been taken into care and where the child is located. Social services are required to provide a written decision and explain the reasons behind it.

You are also entitled to a **public counsel**, meaning a lawyer appointed by the court and paid by the state, who will represent your and your child's interests throughout the process. If you do not speak Swedish, you have the right to an interpreter during all contacts with authorities and to have important documents translated.

You also have the right to appeal the decision to a higher court within three weeks.

As a guardian of a child placed in a foster home or a home for care and residence (HVB), it is important to understand your rights and responsibilities as well as those of your child. Social services have overall responsibility for ensuring that your child receives the care and support they need and will maintain regular contact with your child and decide on placement. Foster parents or HVB staff are responsible for day-to-day care such as clothing, meals, homework and other daily matters.

You remain the legal guardian and have the right to information about your child's progress and to review records and notes. You can voice concerns and have your views recorded. When a child is placed under LVU, however, the social board assumes decision-making authority over issues such as contact and healthcare.

Your child also has specific rights during placement. These include the right to participate in matters that concern them, receive information, be treated with respect and kindness, express their opinions privately to foster parents, HVB staff or social workers, be listened to, read investigations and court decisions about themselves, read notes and have their corrections recorded, receive education or other occupation, receive help with schoolwork, obtain necessary healthcare including dental care, and to contact the Health and **Social Care Inspectorate (IVO)** if they feel their rights are not respected or the care arrangements are not adequate.

The child's contact with you, siblings and other important people should be maintained if it is deemed in the child's best interest. The child's wishes are decisive, although contact may be limited in LVU placements. Both you and your child (if over 15) can appeal such decisions to a court. The child also has the right to write letters or call anyone they wish unless restrictions are in place.

If you believe something is wrong with your child's care, first speak with your child's social worker or, if they are unavailable, their manager. You can also contact IVO, which supervises social services and ensures that deficiencies are corrected. IVO cannot change decisions made by a social board or court, but inspectors can speak with your child alone during oversight visits. You may remain anonymous when contacting IVO, although they will need details of the issue and the relevant social board in order to investigate.

3. Förälderns omedelbara åtgärder



Immediate Actions for Parents

SE Svenska

När du får information om att ditt barn har omhändertagits är det avgörande att agera snabbt och strukturerat. Det första steget är att ta reda på var barnet befinner sig och vem som har fattat beslutet. Detta kan innebära att du kontaktar både socialtjänsten och skolan för att få en tydlig bild av vad som har hänt.

Därefter bör du omedelbart kontakta socialtjänsten och begära att få tala med ansvarig handläggare eller enhetschef. Vid kontakten är det viktigt att tydligt presentera dig och ange att du är vårdnadshavare, samt att du vill få information om skälen till beslutet och barnets placering. Samtidigt bör du noggrant dokumentera all information du får, inklusive namn, titel, datum och tid.

Det är också viktigt att begära att få ta del av det skriftliga beslutet samt alla underliggande handlingar, såsom utredningar och eventuella orosanmälningar. Om du inte får kontakt via telefon bör du skicka en skriftlig begäran via e-post eller brev.

Parallellt bör du föra en noggrann dokumentation över alla kontakter, möten och samtal. Denna dokumentation kan senare få stor betydelse som bevisning.

Slutligen bör du kontakta skolan för att få en beskrivning av vad som har inträffat, inklusive om skolan har gjort en anmälan och om polisen har varit involverad.

GB English

If you are informed that your child has been taken into care, it is essential to act quickly and in a structured manner. The first step is to find out where your child is and who made the decision. This may involve contacting both social services and the school.

You should then immediately contact social services and request to speak with the responsible caseworker or manager. Clearly state that you are the guardian and that you want to understand the reasons for the decision and where your child is located. At the same time, you should carefully document all information, including names, titles, dates, and times.

You should also formally request the written decision and all related documents, including investigation materials and any concern reports. If you cannot reach them by phone, send a written request via email or letter.

In parallel, you should keep detailed records of all contacts and events, as this documentation may later serve as important evidence.

Finally, contact the school to understand what happened and whether they made a report or involved the police.

4. Juridisk hjälp Legal Help

SE Svenska



Att få juridisk hjälp i ett LVU-ärende är avgörande. Du har rätt till ett offentligt biträde som ska stödja dig genom hela processen och säkerställa att dina rättigheter tas tillvara. Det är viktigt att begära detta så tidigt som möjligt om det inte redan har tilldelats.

Du har även rätt att använda tolk om du inte behärskar svenska, och denna rätt gäller från första kontakten och genom hela processen.

GB English

Legal assistance is crucial in an LVU case. You have the right to a public counsel who will support you throughout the process and ensure that your rights are protected. It is important to request this immediately if it has not already been assigned.

You also have the right to an interpreter from the first contact and throughout the entire process.

5. Vad du inte ska göra What You Should NOT Do

SE Svenska

Det är mycket viktigt att du inte försöker ta tillbaka barnet på egen hand, exempelvis genom att åka till placeringen eller skolan. Ett sådant agerande kan leda till allvarliga juridiska konsekvenser och försämra din situation.

Du bör även undvika att sprida obekräftad information, särskilt via sociala medier, eftersom detta kan påverka ärendet negativt.

GB English

It is very important that you do not attempt to retrieve your child on your own, for example by going to the placement or school. Such actions may lead to legal consequences and worsen your situation.

You should also avoid spreading unverified information, especially on social media, as this may negatively affect your case.

6. Fri text – vägledning vid kontakt med socialtjänsten Free Text – Guidance When Contacted by Social Services

SE Svenska

Om du blir kontaktad av socialtjänsten på grund av en orosanmälan kan det bero på flera olika saker, såsom att barnet har berättat något i skolan, att personal har observerat något avvikande, att en granne har reagerat, eller att någon annan har gjort en anmälan. Det är viktigt att känna till att den som gör anmälan i många fall kan vara anonym.

Enligt lag är socialtjänsten skyldig att utreda alla inkomna uppgifter som rör barnets situation. Det innebär att en utredning inte nödvändigtvis betyder att något är fastställt, utan att myndigheten behöver ta reda på vad som faktiskt har hänt.

I denna situation är det viktigt att du samarbetar med socialtjänsten och visar vilja att bidra till en lösning, samtidigt som du inte ska erkänna något som du inte anser vara korrekt. Det kan vara en fördel att en vårdnadshavare för dialogen för bådars räkning, samt att du uppträder lugnt, strukturerat



och engagerat. Att visa att du är villig att ta del av och arbeta med föreslagna åtgärder kan påverka ärendets utveckling positivt.

gb English

If you are contacted by social services due to a concern report, it may be because your child has said something at school, the school has observed something unusual, a neighbour has reacted to something, or another individual has raised a concern. The person reporting can often remain anonymous.

By law, social services are required to investigate all concerns regarding a child. This does not mean that anything has been proven, but rather that the authorities must assess the situation.

In this context, it is important to cooperate with social services and demonstrate a willingness to resolve the situation, while not admitting anything you believe is incorrect. It may be beneficial for one guardian to communicate on behalf of both, while remaining calm, structured, and engaged, and limit the use of an interpreter. Showing willingness to work with suggested measures can positively influence how the case develops.

7. Process efter orosanmälan **Process After a Concern Report**

se Svenska

Efter en orosanmälan följer normalt en strukturerad process. Inledningsvis görs en skyddsbedömning inom 24 timmar för att avgöra om barnet behöver omedelbart skydd. Därefter sker en förhandsbedömning inom 14 dagar där socialtjänsten beslutar om en utredning ska inledas.

Om en utredning startas kan den pågå i upp till fyra månader och innefattar samtal med barnet, vårdnadshavare och andra relevanta personer. Efter avslutad utredning fattas beslut om eventuella insatser, vilket kan innebära stöd i hemmet eller i mer allvarliga fall vård enligt LVU.

gb English

After a concern report, a structured process follows. First, a safety assessment is conducted within 24 hours to determine if immediate protection is needed. Then, a preliminary assessment is carried out within 14 days to decide whether an investigation should begin.

If an investigation is initiated, it may last up to four months and includes interviews with the child, parents, and other relevant individuals. After the investigation, a decision is made regarding support measures or, in severe cases, care under LVU.

Who to contact and what to do

The person in the core committee responsible for these matters is bound by a duty of confidentiality. This means they are ethically required to keep certain information private and not share it with others. For this reason, it is recommended that sensitive issues are discussed only with that individual. This is important to avoid misunderstandings or speculation about how information may have spread within the community. It also helps ensure that you receive accurate guidance, as people without the proper knowledge or experience in handling such cases may unintentionally provide misleading advice.

However, if you prefer not to seek advice from this person, there are steps you can take on your own.



As mentioned earlier, you are entitled to legal counsel from the municipality (kommun) as well as by law. This is a crucial part of the process to ensure that both your rights and your children's rights are fully protected. If the municipality does not provide legal counsel, or if you would like a second opinion, it is advisable to consult an LVU-specialized lawyer. This can help you assess whether the process has been handled correctly.

There should be multiple meetings involving the school, the child, and the parents before any major decisions are made. In addition, authorities are expected to maintain clear communication with you throughout the process and provide all relevant information.

Contact with the School

In cases of deficiencies or misconduct in school or preschool, always start by contacting the school or preschool directly. Discuss your concerns with the staff or the principal (rektor) and try to find a solution together.

If the issue persists after speaking to the principal, you should submit a formal complaint to the governing authority (huvudman). For municipal schools this is usually the municipality, while independent schools may be run by a private entity, a region or the state. The governing authority is responsible for ensuring that education meets the requirements of the law and must investigate complaints.

Should the problem remain unresolved after contacting the governing authority, you can provide information to the Swedish School Inspectorate (Skolinspektionen) and the Child and Student Ombudsman (BEO). They collect reports that can form the basis for future inspections and BEO investigates cases of abusive treatment. For independent preschools and after-school care not affiliated with a school, the municipality is the supervisory authority.

Lawyers

Each municipality has its own legal counsel, so services may vary. If you are looking for a second opinion, it is a good idea to contact a local lawyer within your municipality. Local lawyers are often more familiar with similar cases in the area and can provide better insight into how such matters are typically handled.

You can search online using terms like "LVU-advokat" together with your area or municipality name. Many of these lawyers also offer free initial consultations.

Real case 1

A child told the school that their parents would hit them if they were not allowed to attend a class they really liked. The child normally attended this class every other week. The school took the statement seriously and reported it to social services.

Social services visited the school, spoke with the child, and concluded that the situation was not serious. Before speaking with the child, the parents were informed that this conversation would take place at the school.

Later, when the parents spoke with the child, the child admitted that the story was made up because they really wanted to attend the class. The parents shared this information with the teacher, who then had a longer discussion with the child. After this, it was confirmed that the child had fabricated the story, and this was reported back to social services.



In this case, all procedures were followed correctly. The parents maintained good communication with the relevant parties, their rights were respected, and they were not subjected to any threats.

Real case 2

In this case, the child was taken from school on a Friday evening, which can be seen as a strategic move since many authorities are closed over the weekend. When the parents requested legal counsel, they were denied. Furthermore, they were reportedly threatened that if they pursued legal counsel, they would not be allowed to see their child at all.

They were also told that the case would be finalized within 4–6 months, which does not align with LVU law, as it requires the case to be presented to the administrative court (förvaltningsdomstol) as soon as possible.. This situation made the parents hesitant to even seek a second opinion from another LVU lawyer.

In this case, the parents' rights appear to have been disregarded, proper procedures were not followed, and there was a clear lack of communication between the school, the parents, and social services. Additionally, the parents were not given sufficient information about what the child had said.

Real case 3

In this case, the child was taken two months ago, and since then the parents have had no contact with the child, nor have they been allowed to see them. The parents were assigned legal counsel, but they did not trust this person, as they felt that information was being shared with social services.

The legal counsel was not cooperative and did not appear to represent the parents' interests properly. Instead, the parents felt pressured to accept the accusations made against them. The lawyer was often unavailable and, at times, claimed that certain matters were not their responsibility. Additionally, the legal counsel did not present information that could serve as evidence of a good upbringing.

The parents were informed about what the child had said, but they found the claims difficult to believe and possibly fabricated. They were not informed of the child's whereabouts. Furthermore, they were threatened that their other children could also be taken. Social services did speak to the other children and temporarily removed them from school, although they were later returned.

A hearing has taken place, and the parents are currently awaiting a decision.

In the meantime, the parents sought a second opinion, which revealed that several aspects of the procedure may not have been properly followed. The new lawyer has agreed to take on the case in line with the parents' wishes after the decision is made, which was a wise step. This legal support will also be state-funded, meaning the parents will not have to cover the cost.

This case highlights further concerns about how the authorities handled the situation, particularly regarding communication and the treatment of the parents.

List of lawyers: (to be updated continuously)

Stocholm stad: <https://www.advokatfirmanglendor.se/>

8. Källor och vidare läsning

Sources and Further Reading

se Svenska

För mer information kan följande källor användas:



- Riksdagen – Lag (1990:52) om vård av unga (LVU)
https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-199052-med-sarskilda-bestammelser-om-var-d_sfs-1990-52/
- Socialstyrelsen – Frågor och svar om LVU
<https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/kunskapsstod-och-regler/omraden/barn-och-unga/barn-och-unga-i-socialtjansten/lvu/>
- Socialstyrelsen – Barn som far illa
- Socialstyrelsen – LVU Information (English PDF)
- Sveriges Domstolar – LVU-processen
<https://www.domstol.se/amnen/tvangsvard/vard-av-unga-lvu/>
- BRIS – <https://www.bris.se>
- Rädda Barnen – <https://www.raddabarnen.se>
- Skolverket - How to Report Problems or Misconduct in School
<https://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/kontakta-skolverket/kontaktvagar-vid-brister-eller-missforhallanden-i-skolan>
- IVO – You as a guardian of a child in care
<https://www.ivo.se/barn-och-ungdomar/var-dnadshavare/>

9. Sammanfattning

Summary

SE Svenska

LVU är en lag som endast används i situationer där det finns en allvarlig risk för barnet. Som vårdnadshavare har du starka rättigheter, inklusive rätt till information, juridiskt stöd och möjlighet att överklaga beslut. Det är avgörande att agera snabbt, dokumentera allt och ta hjälp av juridiskt ombud.

GB English

LVU is a law used only in serious situations where a child is at risk. As a guardian, you have strong legal rights, including the right to information, legal representation, and the ability to appeal decisions. It is essential to act quickly, document everything, and seek legal support.